

WHO IS

MEHER BABA



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BABA?

Questions and Answers on Avatar Meher Baba

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All quoted statements are from Avatar Meher Baba.

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THE AVATAR, AVATARHOOD, AND GOD

Q. WHO IS MEHER BABA?

- A.** He is the essence of your very being which provokes you to ask this question.

He is the Awakener who will awaken humanity from its sleep of ignorance to the knowledge of its true Self.

He is the Arouser who will arouse man to the consciousness of his rightful divine heritage.

He is the Light which will dispel the darkness of our selfishness, and make us aware of our oneness in God.

He is the True Friend, who has come to guide mankind to the path of Truth. He is the Deliverer of the World.

He is God in human form — Truth and Truth's Body.

He is the Saviour, the Messiah, the Christ, the Rasool, the Avatar, the Buddha.

He is the Answer to all questions.

He is the Avatar, the God-Man — God and Man in One simultaneously.

He Himself asserted: 'The God-Man is here among men to give them Love for God and to awaken them to the Reality that God alone is real and all else is illusion - a dream.'

Q. WHY IS HE CALLED AN AVATAR?

- A.** He is not an Avatar. He is the Avatar. The same One God who manifests on earth at different times, in different forms, under different names is the Avatar. Meher Baba is called the Avatar because He is the Avatar. He cannot be called other than what He is.

He is the Avatar, not an Avatar. He is called the Avatar because He is God in the form of a human being, the God-Man. The difference between an ordinary man and God-Man is this: The ordinary man is not yet conscious of his inherent Godhood but fully conscious only of his manhood. The God-Man is fully conscious of His Godhood and Manhood simultaneously. He continuously experiences Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Power and Infinite Bliss. He simultaneously suffers with, and in, each one of His creation. As the God-Man, God helps mankind age after age, individually and universally.

The Avatar is the Manifestation of God in the form of a man. At intervals, God manifests on earth in human form because of His love for His children. As God is One, the Avatar cannot be more than one. The Avatar is the one and only God-Man on earth. There cannot be two Avatars at any time.

When God mingles with men as one of them, He is called the Avatar. All other so-called avatars can only be avatars in name, not in fact.

Q. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE AVATAR AND A PERFECT MASTER?

- A.** The Avatar is the God-Man, God become man. The Perfect Master is the Man-God, man become God.

'The God-Man or Avatar is the Master of Masters, and

can give possession of the Pearl (Truth) to any number he likes. The Perfect Master is perfect Perfection, but is circumscribed by His office in regard to His help to men. The Avatar is beyond limits of function; His power and the effects of His power are boundless. The absolute Perfection of the Perfect Master is the same as the God-Man's. The difference between them is in the scope of their functioning. One is limited, the other is unlimited.'

'There are fifty-six God-realized souls in the world at all times. They are always one in consciousness. They are always different in function. For the most part they live and work apart from and unknown to the general public, but five, who act in a sense as a directing body, always work in public and attain to public prominence and importance. These are known as Sadgurus or Perfect Masters. In Avataric periods, the Avatar, as a supreme Sadguru, takes His place as the head of this body and of the spiritual hierarchy as a whole.'

Q. WHEN SO MANY INSPIRED RELIGIONS ALREADY EXIST, WHY IS AN ADDITIONAL REVELATION OF GOD AS AVATAR (MEHER BABA) REQUIRED?

- A.** 'At the time of the manifestation of the Avatar, the force of the new spiritual impulse is so tremendous that it creates quite a new awakening of consciousness. This, combined with the teachings and activities of the Avatar on the physical plane during the life in which He manifests Himself, is given outward form by His followers who call it a new religion.

As the force of the spiritual push gradually weakens with the lapse of time, spirituality also recedes until it almost sinks into insignificance; religion, or rather the outward

form of it, becomes like a dry crust, ready to crumble at any moment, and world conditions reach a climax. It is at this critical juncture that the Avatar appears, and manifests on the physical plane, to give once again the spiritual impulse that the world then requires. The force of this spiritual push is again adopted as a new outward religious form according to the existing circumstances. The Avatar, after completing His mission, abandons His physical body and assumes the Impersonal aspect of Divinity as before, till He is compelled once more by force of circumstances to take the human form and reappear and manifest as the Avatar; and the process goes on and on and on.

This is why the contemporary religions have apparently different forms, owing to the different times and circumstances in which they were established, and they are known after the name of the Avatar of that particular period, though in essence they contain the same ideal of life, taught over and over again by the same Divinity, who appeared and manifested on earth at different times and under different circumstances.'

The one and the only religion that the Avatar time and again hands over to humanity is 'love God'. Time and again this simple Avatavic religion loses its charm because each time the Avatar passes away from amidst mankind, man creates a new religion of his own around the personality of the Avatar.

Q. HOW CAN MEHER BABA HAVE BOTH THE BUDDHA AND THE CHRIST CONSCIOUSNESS?

A. Because the Buddha and the Christ consciousness are one and the same.

‘There is but one Divine Infinite Consciousness, whether realized by the Christ, or experienced by the Buddha, and the external expression of this Divine Consciousness varies according to the circumstances confronting (at the respective historical times) the God-Man who has attained to this super-conscious state.

Once gained, the Cosmic Consciousness is gained for eternity, and is continually present either on the spiritual plane, or as the Word made flesh, for the upliftment of humanity.’

Q. WHY DOES MEHER BABA CALL HIMSELF GOD?

A. What else can He call Himself when He is God? He says there is nothing but God. He not only says He is God, He says that all are God in varying degrees of consciousness. We are not conscious of our Godhood, and continue to experience the duality of illusion. He has the full consciousness and continuous experience of Godhood, and the authority to proclaim ‘I Am God’. He says that He is God in human form, the Avatar, the Ancient One, who has come to redeem the modern world.

Q. HOW DO WE KNOW MEHER BABA IS GOD?

A. One can never know God, unless one has implicit faith in the manifestation of God and His attributes. Meher Baba is not only God, He is God and man. He is the God-Man. It is He who makes the inconceivable God conceivable through Himself. It is He who makes the unapproachable God approachable through being in our midst. He makes the attributes of God – infinite love, infinite compassion, infinite charity – more tangible to us by being in our

midst. Meher Baba is God in human form. It is this human form of His that helps mankind to conceive the very Being of God. When God Himself manifests as the Avatar, the Christ, Rasool, by His Grace it is possible for man to recognise Him and know Him as God.

Q. IF MEHER BABA IS ALL-KNOWING AND ALL-POWERFUL, WHY HAS HE ALLOWED HIMSELF AND HIS DISCIPLES TO MEET WITH ACCIDENTS AND TO SUFFER?

- A.** Only when the All-knowing and the All-powerful shoulders universal suffering can humanity have hope of deliverance from suffering. To meet with accidents and to have physical injuries are but the outward signs of the inner suffering of the Avatar.

Zoroaster allowed Himself to be stabbed in the back. Krishna chose to be shot by an arrow. Rama made Himself helpless to prevent Sita's abduction, and roamed in the forests in search of her. Jesus Christ permitted Himself to be crucified. Mohammed was stoned by His adversaries. Buddha died of poison. And yet the Christ, the Buddha, the Avatar is All-knowing, All-powerful.

Meher Baba is the Compassionate Father of all, and in His compassion He permits some of His disciples to share in His universal suffering. To the disciples this sharing is a blessing, a divine boon.

'Nobody suffers in vain, for true freedom is spiritual freedom and suffering is a ladder towards it. Man unknowingly suffers for God, and the God-Man knowingly suffers for man.'

'Ordinary man suffers for himself, Masters suffer for humanity, whereas the Avatar suffers for one and all beings and things.'

**Q. WHEN THE GOD-MAN IS IN OUR MIDST, WHY IS THERE SO MUCH SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?
HOW CAN WE BELIEVE IN SUCH A GOD-MAN?**

A. It is through the very suffering in the world that mankind will find the God-Man in its midst. It is his helplessness that makes man turn his face towards God and helps him implore mercy.

Only when suffering reaches its height in the world does God manifest Himself as the Avatar in our midst, to deliver mankind from suffering by transmuting the consciousness of humanity. The Avatar does His work with infinite compassion, whether one believes or does not believe in Him.

Q. WHY SHOULD MISERY PERPETUALLY EXIST ON EARTH IN SPITE OF GOD'S INFINITE LOVE AND MERCY?

A. 'The source of eternal Bliss is the Self in all, and the cause of perpetual misery is the selfishness of all. As long as satisfaction is derived through selfish pursuits, misery will always exist. Only because of the infinite Love and Mercy of God can man learn to realize, through the lessons of misery on earth, that inherent in him is the source of infinite Bliss and that all suffering is his labour of love to unveil his own infinite Self.'

Q. WHY DOES INDIA SEEM TO SUFFER MORE THAN OTHER COUNTRIES EVEN THOUGH THE AVATAR WAS BORN AND LIVED IN INDIA?

A. It is always when suffering is intense on earth that God manifests as the Avatar, the Christ. And it is but natural for the Redeemer to live among those who suffer most.

Q. HOW DOES MEHER BABA HELP AN ASPIRANT AND HOW DOES HE HELP MANKIND?

- A.** As a rule, Masters help individually according to the temperament and preparedness of the aspirant. But this being the Avataric period, that is, the end of the previous Cycle and the beginning of the new one, Meher Baba's spiritual help to humanity will be both individual and collective. He rejuvenates and infuses new life into the old order of things, and imparts the highest state of spirituality — the state of Oneness with the infinite Ocean of Bliss, Knowledge and Power — to his close disciples. He gives a general spiritual push to the whole universe.

'I have come to sow the seed of love in your hearts so that in spite of all superficial diversity which your life in illusion must experience and endure, the feeling of oneness through love is brought about amongst all nations, creeds, sects and castes of the world.'

'I have come for all, but I am for the few.'

Q. WHAT IS MEHER BABA'S MISSION?

- A.** Meher Baba is not a missionary. He is the Ancient One come again among men to help them to know that God alone is real and all else is illusion — God's own shadow.

Q. DO YOU THINK THAT MEHER BABA'S WORK AS THE AVATAR IS OVER AND COMPLETE?

- A.** Meher Baba's work as the Avatar is complete, but cannot be over. His work is never over. His work continues in those who live His message of Love and Truth.

Q. WHY HAS GOD CREATED THIS UNIVERSE?

- A.** 'Who says God has created this world? We have created it by our own imagination. God is Supreme, Independent. When we say He has created this illusion we lower Him and His Infinity; He is beyond all this. Only when we find Him in ourselves and even in our day-to-day life, do all doubts vanish. We then know Him, and therefore we have not even to think about Him. Do you ever have to think as to whether you are a man or a woman? The answer is No, because you know you are a man. So it is when we become God. Unless and until we experience this supreme Knowledge it is all mere talk, reasoning, logic and theory.'

Q. WHAT IS GOD?

- A.** To define God is to limit Him. He is unlimited and infinite. The most apt answer to the question 'What is God?' is a counter-question, 'What is not God?'

Though everybody in Existence is nothing but God, we are conscious only of our manhood. What indeed is required of us is to become conscious of our own inherent Godhood.

Q. WHY DID MEHER BABA SAY THAT HE WAS GOD?

- A.** 'I am the Ancient One. When I say I am God it is not because I have thought about it and concluded that I am God — I know it to be so. Many consider it blasphemy for one to say he is God; but in truth it would be blasphemous for me to say I am not God.

I have come down to your level of consciousness while retaining Infinite Consciousness; and I repeatedly tell

you that I am God in order to help you know that you too are God. I am God and everyone and everything is nothing but God, and one day everyone and everything too will become God consciously.'

Q. IS THERE ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD AND THE GOD-MAN?

A. Yes, there is a world of difference. Meher Baba reminds us that God forgives everything but hypocrisy. It is only the God-Man who forgives mankind's hypocrisy and the hypocrite.

'The judges in the world bring guilt to the guilty and punish them according to the laws of the land; I am the Divine Judge who also brings guilt to the guilty but forgives them.'

Q. CAN ONE KNOW GOD?

A. If God exists then it is but natural that we should strive to see Him and to know Him.

'God cannot be explained, He cannot be argued about, He cannot be theorized, nor can He be discussed and understood. God can only be lived.

Nevertheless, all that is said here and explained about God to appease the intellectual convulsions of the mind of man, still lacks many more words and further explanations because the truth is that the Reality must be realized and the divinity of God must be attained and lived.

To understand the infinite, eternal Reality is not the Goal of individualized beings in the Illusion of Creation, because the Reality can never be understood; it is to be realized by conscious experience.

Therefore the Goal is to realize the Reality and attain the "I Am God" state in human form.'

AVATAR — PERSONAL

Q. WHAT IS MEHER BABA'S RELIGION?

- A.** He belongs to no religion. Every religion belongs to Him. He said: 'My personal religion is my being the Ancient Infinite One; and the religion I impart to all is Love for God, which is the truth of all religions.'

Q. WAS HE MARRIED?

- A.** In this Advent, no.

Q. HAS HE EVER BEEN IN LOVE?

- A.** Yes, he has. And He is still in love. He has been and eternally is in love with Humanity!

He is Love — limitless Love, Divine Love manifested.

Q. WHAT DID HE SAY ON MARRIAGE? DID HE ALLOW INTER-CASTE MARRIAGE?

- A.** If a man and a woman love each other and wish to marry then they should marry by all means, taking into consideration their family and social responsibilities.

Meher Baba was unconcerned about inter-caste marriage because for Him there was no distinction of caste or creed. He said that if both individuals love each other and their parents have no objection to the marriage, then there is no reason why an inter-caste marriage should be objected to.

**Q. WHAT HAS HE TO SAY ON
'FAMILY PLANNING'?**

A. Restrict the number of children to not more than three, if you can afford three, and abide by the laws of the land.

Q. WHAT WERE HIS CHARACTERISTICS?

A. 'Meher Baba was of medium height, about five feet six. As a young man his build was slender, and films show him moving with a graceful, floating walk — with which he many times covered thirty miles a day, for days on end, so that his most vigorous companions could scarcely keep pace with him. Later, after his two severe car accidents, his body became thick, since almost any form of movement gave him pain; but when you put your arms round him — for he would often embrace his followers or allow them to embrace him — his body seemed simultaneously firm and insubstantial, as though having solidity but little weight. As a rule he wore Indian dress with sandals or else with his feet bare, and since they were almost never confined in shoes, his toes stood out separate and strong. His hands looked powerful enough to crack stones, but he moved his fingers with astonishing delicacy, as though playing an invisible musical instrument, to convey his silent meaning; while doing so he would often look up at his interpreter with a humorous, trustful gaze. His expression changed continually, but it was particularly through his eyes that the pattern of thought and feeling was conveyed. Intensely black, they would in a few seconds lovingly greet his audience, sparkle with laughter, or contemplate some situation with a sternness there was no resisting or escaping. When you yourself became the object of a particularly penetrating gaze, it became impossible to return the stare, so that one turned one's head aside like a cat or dog looked directly in the eyes by a human being.

At different periods Baba wore his hair at varying lengths, down to his shoulders and below in early life; later it was brushed back from his high square forehead; braided at times into a pigtail. He had a powerful hooked nose, giving him in one or two photographs the look of a Kurdish brigand, and his skin — which was neither dark nor fair but something in between, as might be expected from his Persian origins — was unusually sensitive. This sensitivity compelled him when in the West to be careful about cold or draughts; while in India he took care, at least later in life, to protect head and face with an umbrella.’*

Q. WHAT WERE HIS ACTIVITIES?

A. ‘I enjoy games, chiefly cricket, playing marbles, flying kites and also listening to music, although I can do so only on rare occasions. From time immemorial, I have been playing with the Mayavic universe and this enjoyment of playing still persists. I sometimes see motion pictures (mostly humorous ones), and enjoy my real state of being the eternal Producer of the vast, ever-changing, never-ending film called the universe. I also find relaxation in listening to humorous stories.’

Q. WAS MEHER BABA VEGETARIAN?

A. He was neither a vegetarian nor a non-vegetarian. He took whatever breakfast, lunch or supper was prepared for Him with love. However, His favourite dish was plain dal and rice.

Q. DID MEHER BABA OBSERVE FAST?

A. Yes, He often observed rigorous fasts, for weeks at a time. Once He fasted for six months, taking nothing but a limited amount of coffee each day. But His fasting was not an act of austerity or penance, as that of an ascetic who seeks spiritual gain. For Him, there was nothing left to gain. When He fasted it was for the spiritual benefit of mankind.

* The quote is taken from a biography of Avatar Meher Baba, *MUCH SILENCE*, by Tom and Dorothy Hopkinson.

Q. DOES PHYSICAL FASTING HELP MENTAL FASTING?

- A.** 'What is fasting the mind? It is having no thoughts. But this is impossible. When you entrust your mind to me by constantly remembering me, there are no thoughts left on which the mind can feed. This fasting is the true and essential fasting. Starving the stomach may benefit the health but it does not necessarily help spiritual advancement.'

Q. WHO ARE HIS INTIMATE DISCIPLES? HAS ANY OF THEM REALIZED GOD?

- A.** Anyone who adheres to the discipline set by Him and carries out His every command without any reservation is His intimate disciple. To live with Him from day to day is more than God-realization for His disciples, who love Him and revere Him as God on earth.

Meher Baba can arouse the highest ideals in men and women, and touch the hearts of millions.

'My true greatness will be seen in the transformation I effect in my disciples.'

'In those who contact Him Meher Baba awakens a love that consumes all selfish desires in the flame of the one desire to serve Him. Those who consecrate their lives to Him gradually become identified with Him in consciousness. Little by little, their humanity is absorbed into His divinity and they become free.'

Q. HOW DID MEHER BABA MAINTAIN HIMSELF AND HIS DISCIPLES?

- A.** There were many followers of Meher Baba who desired to spend money for His and His disciples' daily needs; only a few were permitted to do so. Apart from these followers, there were those who wished to express their

devotion in the form of simple gifts, and when the manner of expression touched Him He accepted these also, and distributed them among those who were with Him at the time,irrespective of caste, creed or faith.

Meher Baba Himself owned no property, and never handled money except to give to the poor and sick.

Q. DID MEHER BABA LEAVE AN ORGANISATION?

A. Meher Baba did not leave an organisation. He made a Trust Deed known as Avatar Meher Baba Trust, which covers the maintenance and development of the area surrounding His Tombshrine, and looks after the physical well-being of certain disciples who have been with Him over the years. Many of these disciples are occupied solely in the administration of the Trust and its objectives, and in sharing His messages of Love and Truth while welcoming the countless lovers of Truth who come to pay homage at the Tombshrine of the God-Man Meher Baba.

This Trust is solely dependent on donations received from people all over the world.

THE PRESENT ADVENT

Q. IS MEHER BABA PHYSICALLY ON EARTH NOW?

A. No. He dropped His physical body about 12.15pm Indian time on 31st January 1969 at Meherazad, Ahmednagar, India.

Meher Baba the God-Man shed His man-form, but is with us as our Eternal Beloved. In His man-form He stationed Himself in India, but now He is everywhere.

'Believe that I am the Ancient One. Do not doubt that for a moment. There is no possibility of my being anyone else. I am not this body that you see. It is only a coat I put on when I visit you. I am Infinite Consciousness. I sit with you, play and laugh with you; but simultaneously I am working on all planes of existence.

Before me are saints and perfect saints and masters of the earlier stages of the spiritual path. They are all different forms of me. I am the Root of every one and every thing. An infinite number of branches spread out from me. I work through, and suffer in and for, each one of you.'

Q. WHAT PERIOD OF TIME DOES THIS ADVENT OF GOD-MAN COVER?

A. During Meher Baba's physical lifetime on earth, and for about 100 years or 200 years after He drops His body, depending upon the length of time before His

next Advent. While in His man-form Meher Baba said that now is the time when He is most approachable, and each and every one can form an intimate relationship by loving and obeying Him.

Q. NOW THAT MEHER BABA IS NOT ON EARTH, TO WHOM DO WE TURN FOR GUIDANCE?

A. Although Meher Baba's physical presence is not now available, His divine presence as the Eternal Beloved is always available for every heart that yearns for Him.

MEHER BABA'S SILENCE

Q. DID MEHER BABA MAINTAIN SILENCE DURING HIS LIFETIME?

- A.** Yes, He was completely silent, uttering no word, for 44 years. This silence began on 10th July 1925 and remained unbroken at the time of His physical death on 31st January 1969.

Q. HOW DID HE COMMUNCIATE?

- A.** Through His divine Love which reaches the hearts of all who come in His presence.

Through the language of the heart, which is love — pure divine Love.

Through the silent language of the heart which is more potent than any spoken word.

Through the gestures of His hands and fingers which were more expressive and eloquent than the spoken word.

Q. WHY DID MEHER BABA OBSERVE SILENCE?

- A.** For the benefit of mankind.

Meher Baba said, 'The voice that is heard deep within the soul is my voice. Through those who are receptive to this voice, I speak eternally. My outward silence is no spiritual exercise. It has been undertaken and maintained for the good of others. I bind myself with silence, that when I break it mankind will realize what real freedom is.'

'Things that are real are always given and received in silence.'

'Throughout eternity I have laid down principles and precepts, but mankind has ignored them. Man's inability to live God's words makes the Avatar's teaching a mockery. Instead of practising the compassion He taught, man has waged crusades in His name. Instead of living the humility, purity and truth of His words, man has given way to hatred, greed and violence.

Because man has been deaf to the principles and precepts laid down by God in the past, in this present Avataric form I observe silence. You have asked for and been given enough words — it is now time to live them.'

'Come prepared to receive not so much of my words but of my Silence.'

'Drown all sound in my Silence, if you would hear my Word of words.'

Q. WHEN DID MEHER BABA BREAK HIS SILENCE?

- A.** Meher Baba did not break his silence through spoken word. But He did break His silence in many a human heart and continues to do so — 'When the WORD of my LOVE breaks out of its Silence and speaks in your hearts, telling you who I really am, you will know that that is the Real Word you have always been longing to hear.'

MEHER BABA'S ACTIVITIES

Q. WHAT WERE MEHER BABA'S ACTIVITIES?

A. He as man helped the poor and the afflicted. As the God-Man He contacted innumerable souls absorbed and overpowered in the love of God. These are usually called the Masts*. In doing so He travelled extensively throughout the sub-continent of India. Besides His travels in India He also travelled abroad thirteen times and went around the world three times.

During different periods of His life, Meher Baba established free schools, hospitals and dispensaries, and shelters for the itinerant poor.

He gave spiritual discourses to His disciples who lived with Him. These are recorded and published and distributed for the benefit of the world.

He gave darshan to the public when He was not in seclusion.

When he was not in seclusion, He gave interviews to His Lovers who came from distant places and different countries to be with Him.

When He was not in seclusion, He gave personal attention to the large amount of correspondence that came to Him from His followers all over the world, and particularly from the hundreds of Meher Centres in India and abroad that spread His message of Love and Truth.

When He was in seclusion, He did not attend to such matters, wishing to remain undisturbed for reasons of His universal work. Although He continually did His universal work on all levels of the inner planes of consciousness,

* Pronounced as 'must'

at specific periods when His universal work was stepped up to a greatly intensified degree, He retired into strict seclusion.

Sometimes when He was in seclusion, He bathed, clothed and fed lepers because, He said, they were 'beautiful souls in ugly cages.' Because He Himself suffered infinitely, those who suffer are dear to Him.

Q. WHAT DID MEHER BABA ACTUALLY DO WHEN HE WAS IN SECLUSION?

- A.** None knows what He actually did during the periods of His seclusion, but He said that He attended to His universal work on the inner planes of consciousness, about which we can have no idea. At such times He wished to remain absolutely undisturbed by visitors or correspondence etc. He also said, 'Everyone does something but I do nothing.'

Q. WHAT IS MEHER BABA'S WORK?

- A.** 'To those who wish to know about my activities I can only say: As far as my inner life and internal activities are concerned, only God and those who are One with God can know and understand. As far as my external activities are concerned — regarding my work with the God-intoxicated, saints, sadhus and the poor, or contacting them, serving them and bowing down to them in whole-hearted devotion — these have mostly been recorded.'

Q. WHAT IS MEHER BABA'S BUSINESS?

- A.** 'Saints are God's assets and sinners are His liabilities. God, the infinite source of wisdom and justice, goes on eternally turning His liabilities into assets.'

Q. WHAT DOES COMING TO MEHER BABA MEAN?

A. 'When I the Ancient One embrace you I awaken something within you which gradually grows. It is the seed of Love that I have sown. There is a long period and great distance between the breaking open of the seed and its flowering and fruiting. Actually the Goal is neither far nor near and there is no distance to cross nor time to count. In Eternity all is here and now. You have simply to become that which you are. You are God, the Infinite Existence', and 'I am the Eternal Beloved.'

Q. WILL ANY CHANGES TAKE PLACE IN THE EXISTING RELIGIONS WITH THE 'SPIRITUAL PUSH' THAT MEHER BABA HAS IMPARTED TO THE WORLD?

A. 'All collective movements and religions have hinged round one Personality who supplied the motive force. Without this centrifugal force, all movements are bound to fail. Societies and organisations have never succeeded in making people attain spiritual perfection.'

Meher Baba's message pertains to Divine Love, universal brotherhood, right living, and the elimination of the motive of self-interest. Yet in reality Meher Baba has not come to teach. He has come to awaken. By the power of the Divine Love which flows from Him continually He transforms the consciousness of those who come to Him for liberation, that they may know through experience what the philosophers have tried to teach theoretically through the ages.

'I have not come to establish any cult, society or organisation; nor even to establish a new religion. The religion that I shall give teaches the knowledge of the One behind

the many. The book that I shall make people read is the book of the heart that holds the key to the mystery of life. I shall bring about a happy blending of the head and heart. I shall revitalize all religions and cults and bring them together like beads on one string.'

'I am equally approachable to one and all, big and small, To saints who rise and to sinners who fall, Through all the various paths that give the Divine Call. I am approachable alike by saints whom I adore, and by sinners whom I am for; and equally through Sufism, Vedantism, Christianity, or Zoroastrianism or Buddhism, and other "isms" of any kind.

And also directly through no medium of "isms" at all.'

Q. WILL MEHER BABA BRING PEACE AND HAPPINESS TO THE WORLD?

- A.** There exists at the present moment a universal dissatisfaction and an indescribable longing for something that will end the terrible chaos and misery that overshadows the world just now. Meher Baba is going to satisfy this longing and will lead the world to real happiness.

The disorders in the world without are a reflection of the disorders within. Meher Baba will enable mankind to solve their inner problems by awakening the divine elements in them.

Q. DID MEHER BABA DO ANY 'HEALING' AS JESUS DID?

- A.** In this advent Meher Baba emphasised: 'Real healing is spiritual healing, whereby the soul, becoming free from desires, doubts and hallucinations, enjoys the eternal bliss of God.'

Untimely physical healing might retard the spiritual healing. If borne willingly, physical and mental suffering can make one worthy of receiving spiritual healing. Consider mental and physical suffering as gifts from God, which, if accepted gracefully, lead to everlasting happiness.'

Q. WHY DOESN'T MEHER BABA PERFORM MIRACLES?

- A.** Miracles when performed to exhibit occult powers are nothing more than a passing show.

Meher Baba's miracles are performed silently in the hearts of his followers, awakening them to the spiritual values and true purpose of life.

Meher Baba says that God is to be known through Love, and not through the illusion of miracles. 'Ages and ages ago, I did perform one great miracle and the whole of this illusion of Creation came from Me.'

'The only real miracle for a Perfect One is to make others perfect too, to make them realize the infinite state which He Himself enjoys. That is the real miracle . . . otherwise miracles have nothing to do with Truth at all.'

'When I perform the first and last miracle (that of breaking my silence and uttering that Original Word), I won't raise the dead; but I will make those who live for the world dead to the world and live in God. I won't give sight to the blind, but will make people blind to illusion and make them see God as Reality.'

MEHER BABA AND THE SPIRITUAL PATH

- Q. WHAT SPIRITUAL PATH DOES MEHER BABA RECOMMEND FOR HIS LOVERS?**
- A.** Meher Baba has said that He is the Way and the Goal, and for those who love Him there is no spiritual path to follow other than to love Him as He should be loved. For such a lover, the spiritual path follows him, rather than him following the path.
- Q. WHAT YOGA DOES MEHER BABA WANT HIS LOVERS TO PRACTISE?**
- A.** The only yoga Meher Baba wants His lovers to strive for is 'You go and I come.'
- Q. DID MEHER BABA LEAVE ANY ORDERS FOR OUR WELL-BEING?**
- A.** Meher Baba left four orders:
- (a) No drugs except under medical supervision
 - (b) No sexual relations outside marriage
 - (c) No involvement with other spiritual masters or gurus
 - (d) No dishonesty
- Q. IF ONLY THE ABOVE ORDERS WERE GIVEN, HOW DO WE KNOW WHAT WE SHOULD DO IN LIFE?**
- A.** He has placed awareness of what we should or should not do in our hearts. It is inherent.

Q. DO CONSCIOUSNESS-EXPANDING DRUGS HELP IN ATTAINING TO GOD?

A. 'No drug, whatever its great promise, can help one to attain the spiritual goal. There is no short-cut to the goal except through the grace of the Avatar, and drugs give only a semblance of "spiritual experience", a glimpse of a false Reality.'

'All so-called spiritual experiences generated by taking "mind-changing" drugs are superficial, and add enormously to one's addiction to the deceptions of illusion which is but the shadow of Reality.'

'An individual may feel drug-taking makes him a "better" man socially and personally. But one will be a better man through Love than one can ever be through drugs or any other artificial aid. And the best man is he who has surrendered himself to the Avatar irrespective of his personal or social standing.'

'If God can be found through the medium of any drug, God is not worthy of being God.'

Q. WHY SHOULD WE NOT APPROACH OTHER SPIRITUAL MASTERS AND GURUS?

A. 'I often warn my lovers not to visit any saints. Why do I do so? Because in the case of such visits there is a likelihood of breaking the orders that I have given you. If you have faith in me as the Ancient One, it is unnecessary for you to visit any saint or sadhu, or to promise any such person to obey his instructions.'

'My advice to the followers of other saints — whether counterfeit or real — is that it is not necessary for them to come to me unless they are ready to follow my instructions. No one should come to me for help unless he is prepared to obey me implicitly.'

'I am not a saint. I am the Avatar. Tukaram, the Perfect Master, warned people about their attitude toward and contact with the saints. So how much more careful one must be about one's contact with the Avatar.'

'It is very important at this critical period of the Avatatic Age to beware at all times of persons who lead others into believing that they are saintly and pious and profess to possess supernatural powers. However pious such persons appear to be, a lover of Meher Baba must never mix such piety with the Divinity of the Avatar.

A true lover of Meher Baba must remember the repeated warning given to all His lovers time and again to stay away from persons who feel and assert that they are masters and saints and possess powers to help human beings. Meher Baba's lovers and workers should never get involved with such persons and affairs, much less with perverted "helpers of humanity" who have no reverence or regard for the Perfect Masters and the Avatar of the Age. Beware of those who exploit spirituality to gain their selfish ends and dupe others in the name of Sadgurus and the Avatar.'

'Shun those masters
who are like multi-coloured electric signs
that flash on and off,
brightening the dark sky of your world
and leaving you in darkness again.'

Q. WHAT DOES MEHER BABA MEAN BY HONESTY?

- A.** 'By leading a fearless and honest life, hypocrisy gradually gets weakened. When the heart becomes absolutely clean with honesty, hypocrisy is completely wiped off. This is a very long process, not only in terms of years but in terms of reincarnations.'

'Be natural. If you are dishonest, do not try to hide yourself behind the curtain of honesty. What I want to say is, that you must be most natural rather than to be the least hypocritical.'

'What God's aspect of honesty means is that you serve others in order to make them happy at the cost of your own happiness. Honesty demands that no show and no fuss is made of your service, and you treat others as you treat your own dear ones.'

'Honesty in your dealings with others will clear the strangers out of your heart.'

'Absolute honesty is essential in one's search for God (Truth). The subtleties of the Path are finer than a hair. The least hypocrisy becomes a wave that washes one off the Path.'

'I want you all to be honest. You should not pretend to be what you are not.'

MEHER BABA'S TEACHINGS — MESSAGE

Q. WHAT ARE HIS TEACHINGS?

A. He does not teach, but awakens in us love for God.

Remember God and love God.

'The aim of life is to love God.

The goal of life is to become one with God.

To do this, you have not to renounce the world,

But to renounce low desires, dishonesty and hypocrisy.

Then in the midst of activities you will be loving God as

He should be loved.'

Q. WHAT IS LIFE?

A. To this question Meher Baba smilingly replied:

'Life is a Mighty Joke. He who knows this can hardly be understood by others. He who does not know it finds himself in a state of delusion. He may ponder over this problem day and night, but will find himself incapable of knowing it. Why? People take life seriously, and God lightly; whereas we must take God seriously and life lightly. Then we know that we always were the same and will ever remain the same . . . the Originator of this Joke. This knowledge is not achieved by reasoning. It is the Knowledge of Experience.'

Q. WHAT IS THE REAL MEANING AND PURPOSE OF LIFE AS EXPRESSED BY MEHER BABA?

A. 'To live in the world, and yet not be of it.'

'It is to become identified with the Universal Self, and thus to experience infinite Bliss, Power, and Knowledge; and finally, to be able to impart this experience to others, and make them see the One Indivisible Infinity existing in every phase of life.'

'The purpose of life is to realize God within ourselves . . . to realize our oneness with the Infinite. This can be achieved through Love for God. This can be done even whilst attending to our worldly duties. In the everyday walks of life and amidst intense activities, we should feel detached and dedicate our doings to our Beloved God.'

Q. WHY DOES MEHER BABA STRESS LOVE AS THE PATH TO GOD?

A. 'Before he can know Who he is, man has to unlearn the mass of illusory knowledge he has burdened himself with on the interminable journey from unconsciousness to consciousness. It is only through love that you can begin to unlearn, and, eventually, put an end to all that you do not know. God-love penetrates all illusion, while no amount of illusion can dim God-love. Start learning to love God by beginning to love those whom you cannot. You will find that in serving others you are serving yourself. The more you remember others with kindness and generosity, the less you remember yourself; and when you completely forget yourself, you find me as the Source of all Love.'

Q. HOW ARE WE TO RECONCILE LOVE FOR ALL LIFE WITH LOVE FOR MEHER BABA?

A. There is no compromise in love for God. To love God is to love all. To love all is not loving God, but to love God in all is loving God.

Q. SHOULD ONE GIVE UP RELIGION?

- A.** 'Give up all forms of parrotry. Start practising whatever you truly feel to be true and justly to be just. Do not make a show of your faith and beliefs. You have not to give up your religion, but to give up clinging to the husk of mere ritual and ceremony. To get to the fundamental core of Truth underlying all religions, reach beyond religion.'

Q. WHAT IS MEHER BABA'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS PRAYER OR WORSHIP?

- A.** 'The ideal prayer to the Lord is nothing more than spontaneous praise of His being. You praise Him, not in the spirit of bargain but in the spirit of self-forgetful appreciation of what He really is. You praise Him because He is praiseworthy. Your praise is a spontaneous appreciative response to His true being, as infinite Light, infinite Power and infinite Bliss.'

If you pray with a motive to do good to someone, your prayer may actually bring about good both to him and to yourself. Some people pray for the spiritual benefit of those who have done them some wrong. There also they are helping others spiritually. But all prayers with a motive fall short of the ideal prayer which is without motive. In the entire spiritual panorama of the universe nothing is more sublime than a spontaneous prayer. It gushes out of the human heart, filled with appreciative joy. In its highest form, prayer leaves no room for the illusory diarchy of the lover and the Beloved. It is a return to one's own being.'

Not thinking ill of others is in itself a spontaneous prayer.

Q. DID MEHER BABA GIVE SPECIAL PRAYERS OR MEDITATION?

- A.** Yes, he has given a number of prayers to mankind, and among these are the two principal ones: The Universal Prayer (O, Parvardigar) given in August 1953; and The Prayer of Repentance given in November 1952.

He did not lay stress on any form of meditation. He stressed remembering Him wholeheartedly and constantly while attending to our daily duties. This He said is the best form of meditation. This is the most natural and spontaneous meditation.

However, He has given some discourses on meditation, as well as two charts called the Divine Theme.

‘Love and direct relatedness with the Avatar is the high road of all roads of inner development and while I am in the body and for some time after I drop my body, the potential for Love and direct relationship is there and should be used. But one day, as the Truth and Presence of the Avatar begins to diminish, humanity will have to use lesser, secondary techniques and I must provide for that time, so I have given out these extensive discourses on meditation. But do not mistake me — in the meantime it is a distraction of your time and energies to use meditation.’

Q. IT IS STATED THAT THE BASIS OF MEDITATION IS MENTAL DISCIPLINE, CONCENTRATION: IS THIS SO?

- A.** ‘I attach more importance to love and work than to meditation. If you love a person you naturally and spontaneously think about him. There is no question of forcing the mind in such meditation.’

Q. WHAT DOES MEHER BABA SAY CONCERNING MONEY?

- A.** 'It entirely depends upon the way in which we use our money, whether it is good or bad. Money earned and utilized as a means of livelihood for oneself and for those who depend on one is good. Given as charity for the benefit of humanity it is better. But to give anonymously and yet carefully for the intelligent service and spiritual upliftment of humanity, without dictating as to how it shall be administered or spent, this is the best use of money. But very very few selfless people can do that.

Whether it is good or bad for us to possess money depends entirely on the use we make of it. Fire can serve and warm a man; fire can also burn and destroy a man.' 'Who is a really wealthy person? Wealthy is he who knows how to spend his wealth well.'

Q. DID MEHER BABA ESTABLISH VEGETARIANISM FOR HIS FOLLOWERS?

- A.** 'I allow vegetarians to follow their diet and non-vegetarians to eat meat, fish, etc. However, those who stay with me have as a rule vegetarian diet and occasionally non-vegetarian food.

Q. HAS MEHER BABA ANY SOLUTION FOR THE PROBLEMS OF POLITICS, ECONOMICS, MORALS AND SEX?

- A.** There is no direct solution to these problems. But in the general spiritual push that He imparts to the world, the problems of politics, economics and sex, although they are subsidiary to the primary purpose, will automatically be solved and adjusted, and new values and significance will be attached to matters which appear to baffle solution at the present moment.

'Avataric periods are like the spring-tide of creation. They bring a new release of power, a new awakening of consciousness, a new experience of life—not merely for a few, but for all. Qualities of energy and awareness, which had been used and enjoyed by only a few advanced souls, are made available for all humanity. Life, as a whole, is stepped up to a higher level of consciousness, is geared to a new rate of energy. The transition from sensation to reason was one such step; the transition from reason to intuition will be another.'

Q. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT BY FOLLOWING MEHER BABA?

- A.** That we have to completely unlearn all we think we have learnt in order to begin to know the Truth.

Q. WHAT HAVE YOU GAINED BY FOLLOWING MEHER BABA?

- A.** Meher Baba says that this question is a wrong question. One who follows Him has to lose everything to find Him. Unless one completely loses one's false self, one cannot gain one's true Self.

The loss of some of the false self.

This is the good fortune of each one of us: to be incarnated at the time of the Avatar. He can respond consciously to us. He does respond. This is His work. This is our destiny.

Q. DOES ONE HAVE TO RECEIVE ANY INITIATION FROM HIM TO BE HIS FOLLOWER?

- A.** The only initiation is the love for Him as God that He awakens in one's heart.

Q. DOES HE GIVE ANY 'MANTRA' OR TEACH ANY 'SADHANA'?

A. To repeat His Name is the only mantra that He gives.
To just remember Him wholeheartedly at all times is the only sadhana He prescribes.

Q. WHAT YOGA DOES MEHER BABA WANT HIS LOVERS TO PRACTISE?

A. The only yoga Meher Baba wants His lovers to strive for is 'You go and I come.'

Q. HOW WILL YOU TELL ANYONE IN A NUTSHELL WHAT MEHER BABA'S PHILOSOPHY IS?

A. 'Mind working is man
Mind working fast is mad
Mind working slow is mast (God-absorbed)
Mind stopped is God.'

Q. IS IT POSSIBLE FOR MAN TO ATTAIN THE TRUTH?

A. It is man's birthright to attain the Truth.
'It is possible for man to attain the Truth. As to how it is possible: Discard falsehoods to get at the Truth.
But what is falsehood? You are right when you say that which does not endure is falsehood. Therefore discard all that which does not endure and you will realize the Truth.'

Q. WHAT IS THE GOAL OF LIFE ACCORDING TO MEHER BABA?

A. The annihilation of the mind and the realization to the Self.

**Q. HOW CAN ONE GET HAPPINESS?
WHAT HAS MEHER BABA TO SAY?**

- A.** 'If man wants the happiness he is striving for, let him be more aggressive towards himself and more tolerant towards others.'

'The cause of misery is the selfishness in man.'

'Happiness and misery are two facets of Illusion.'

'Real happiness lies in making others happy.'

Q. HOW TO LOVE GOD?

- A.** 'To love God in the most practical way is to love our fellow-beings. If we feel for others in the same way as we feel for our own dear ones, we love God.'

If, instead of seeing faults in others, we look within ourselves, we are loving God.

If, instead of robbing others to help ourselves, we rob ourselves to help others, we are loving God.

If we suffer in the sufferings of others and feel happy in the happiness of others, we are loving God.

If, instead of worrying over our own misfortunes, we think of ourselves as more fortunate than many many others, we are loving God.

If we endure our lot with patience and contentment, accepting it as His will, we are loving God.

If we understand and feel that the greatest act of devotion and worship to God is not to hurt or harm any of His beings, we are loving God.

To love God as He ought to be loved, we must live for God and die for God, knowing that the goal of life is to love God, and find Him as our own Self.'

Meher Baba also answered: 'How to love God? How do you love anything? If a man falls in love with a beautiful girl, what happens then? No system or principle exists for him. He will not mind ridicule. If people call him mad he does not mind it.

One should become lost in the idea of possessing the Beloved by hook or by crook. When you are prepared in your heart of hearts to gain union with God, at the cost of life and in the face of ridicule of the whole world, then perhaps you may be said to have entered the Lane of Divine Love.'

'We should love God as He ought to be loved.' Baba explained: 'Because in the very beginning imagination gave a twist to Substance and thus gave importance to Shadow, we who are eternally free find ourselves bound, having lost our Original Self in the maze of Illusion. Therefore in spite of possessing Infinite Bliss, we have to experience misery, worries, doubts, failure and helplessness.

When in a flash the Real Knowledge comes that we are not what we seem but are that Infinite One, then all worries disappear, because in reality pleasure and misery do not exist. To get rid of this persistent ignorance and to know the true value of Reality we have to experience God; and God who is the Breath and Life of our lives can only be experienced through honest love.

We have to love Him silently and honestly even in our everyday life. Whilst eating, drinking, talking and doing all our duties we can still love God continuously, without letting anyone know. When God is found you can have no idea what Infinite Bliss and Peace is gained. I give you all my love so that some day you can love God as He ought to be loved.'

TWO PRAYERS GIVEN BY MEHER BABA

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER

O Parvadigar, the Preserver and Protector of all,
You are without Beginning, and without End;
Non-dual, beyond comparison; and none can measure You.

You are without colour, without expression, without form, and
without attributes.

You are unlimited and unfathomable, beyond imagination
and conception; eternal and imperishable.

You are indivisible; and none can see You, but with
eyes divine.

You always were, You always are, and You always will be;
You are everywhere, You are in everything; and You are also
beyond everywhere; and beyond everything.

You are in the firmament and in the depths, You are manifest
and unmanifest; on all planes, and beyond all planes.

You are in the three worlds, and also beyond the three worlds;
You are imperceptible and independent.

You are the Creator, the Lord of Lords, the Knower of all
minds and hearts; You are Omnipotent and Omnipresent.

You are Knowledge Infinite, Power Infinite and Bliss Infinite.

You are the Ocean of Knowledge, All-Knowing, Infinitely
Knowing; the Knower of the past, the present and the future,
and You are Knowledge itself.

You are All-merciful and eternally benevolent;
You are the Soul of souls, the One with infinite attributes;
You are the Trinity of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss;
You are the Source of Truth, the Ocean of Love;
You are the Ancient One, the Highest of the High;
You are Prabhu and Parameshwar; You are the Beyond-God,
and the Beyond-Beyond-God also; You are Parabrahma;
Allah; Elahi; Yezdan, Ahuramazda; and God the Beloved.
You are named Ezad, the only One worthy of worship.

THE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

We repent, O God Most Merciful, for all our sins;
for every thought that was false or unjust or unclean;
for every word spoken that ought not to have been spoken;
for every deed done that ought not to have been done.

We repent for every deed and word and thought inspired
by selfishness, and for every deed and word and thought
inspired by hatred.

We repent most especially for every lustful thought
and every lustful action; for every lie; for all
hypocrisy; for every promise given but not fulfilled,
and for all slander and backbiting.

Most especially also, we repent for every action that
has brought ruin to others; for every word and deed that
has given others pain; and for every wish that pain
should befall others.

In Your Unbounded Mercy we ask You to forgive us,
O God! for all these sins committed by us, and to forgive
us for our constant failures to think and speak and act
according to Your Will.

THE HIGHEST OF THE HIGH

Given by Meher Baba in 1953
at Dehra Dun, India

Consciously or unconsciously, directly or indirectly, each and every creature, each and every human being — in one form or the other — strives to assert individuality. But when eventually man consciously experiences that he is Infinite, Eternal and Indivisible, then he is fully conscious of his individuality as God, and as such experiences Infinite Knowledge, Infinite Power and Infinite Bliss. Thus man becomes God, and is recognised as a Perfect Master, Sadguru, or Qutub. To worship this man is to worship God.

When God manifests on earth in the form of man and reveals His Divinity to mankind, He is recognised as the Avatar — the Messiah — the Prophet. Thus God becomes man.

And so Infinite God, age after age, throughout all cycles, wills through His Infinite Mercy to effect His presence amidst mankind by stooping down to human level in the human form, but His physical presence amidst mankind not being apprehended, He is looked upon as an ordinary man of the world. When He asserts, however, His Divinity on earth by proclaiming Himself the Avatar of the age, He is worshipped by some who accept Him as God; and glorified by a few who know Him as God on earth. But it invariably falls to the lot of the rest of humanity to condemn Him, while He is physically in their midst.

Thus it is that God as man, proclaiming Himself as the Avatar, suffers Himself to be persecuted and tortured, to be humiliated and condemned by humanity for whose sake His Infinite Love has made Him stoop so low, in order that humanity, by its very act of condemning God's manifestation in the form of Avatar should, however indirectly, assert the existence of God in His Infinite Eternal State.

The Avatar is always one and the same, because God is always One and the Same, the Eternal, Indivisible, Infinite One, who manifests Himself in the form of man as the Avatar, as the Messiah, as the Prophet, as the Ancient One — the Highest of the High. This Eternally One and the Same Avatar repeats His manifestation from time to time, in different cycles, adopting different human forms and different names, in different places, to reveal Truth in different garbs and different languages, in order to raise humanity from the pit of ignorance and help free it from the bondage of delusion.

Of the most recognised and much worshipped manifestations of God as Avatar, that of Zoroaster is the earliest — having been before Ram, Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed. Thousands of years ago, he gave to the world the essence of Truth in the form of three fundamental precepts — good thoughts, good words, and good deeds. These precepts were and are constantly unfolded to humanity in one form or another, directly or indirectly in every cycle, by the Avatar of the Age, as he leads humanity imperceptibly towards the Truth. To put these precepts of good thoughts, good words and good deeds into practice is not as easily done as it would appear, though it is not impossible. But to live up to these precepts honestly and literally is as apparently impossible as it is to practise a living death in the midst of life.

In the world there are countless sadhus, mahatmas, mahapurushas, saints, yogis and walis, though the number of genuine ones is very very limited. The few genuine ones are, according to their spiritual status, in a category of their own, which is neither on a level with the ordinary human being nor on a level with the state of the Highest of the High.

I am neither a mahatma nor a mahapurush, neither a sadhu nor a saint, neither a yogi nor a wali. Those who approach me with the desire to gain wealth or to retain their possessions, those who seek through me relief from distress and suffering, those who ask my help to fulfil and satisfy mundane desires, to them I once again declare that, as I am not a sadhu, a saint or a mahatma, mahapurush or yogi, to seek these things through me is but to court utter disappointment, though only apparently; for eventually this disappointment is itself invariably instrumental in bringing about the complete transformation of mundane wants and desires.

The sadhus, saints, yogis, walis and such others who are on the spiritual path, can and do perform miracles and satisfy the transient material needs of individuals who approach them for help and relief.

The question therefore arises that if I am not a sadhu, not a saint, not a yogi, nor a mahapurush nor a wali, then what am I? The natural assumption would be that I am either just an ordinary human being, or I am the Highest of the High. But one thing I say definitely, and that is that I can never be included amongst those having the intermediary status of the real sadhus, saints, yogis and such others.

Now, if I am just an ordinary man, my capabilities and powers are limited — I am no better than or different from an ordinary human being. If people take me as such then they should not

expect any supernatural help from me in the form of miracles or spiritual guidance; and to approach me to fulfil their desires would also be absolutely futile.

On the other hand, if I am beyond the level of an ordinary human being, and much beyond the level of saints and yogis, then I must be the Highest of the High. In which case, to judge me with your human intellect and limited mind and to approach me with mundane desires would not only be the height of folly but sheer ignorance as well; because no amount of intellectual gymnastics could ever understand my ways or judge my Infinite State.

If I am the Highest of High my Will is Law, my Wish governs the Law, and my Love sustains the Universe. Whatever your apparent calamities and transient sufferings, they are but the outcome of my Love for the ultimate good. Therefore, to approach me for deliverance from your predicaments, to expect me to satisfy your worldly desires, would be asking me to do the impossible — to undo what I have already ordained.

If you truly and in all faith accept your Baba as the Highest of the High, it behoves you to lay down your life at His feet, rather than to crave the fulfilment of your desires. Not your one life but your millions of lives would be but a small sacrifice to place at the feet of One such as Baba, who is the Highest of the High; for Baba's unbounded love is the only sure and un-failing guide to lead you safely through the innumerable blind alleys of your transient life.

They cannot obligate me, who, surrendering their all (body, mind, possessions, which perforce they must discard one day), surrender with a motive; surrender because they understand that to gain the everlasting treasure of Bliss they must relinquish ephemeral possessions. This desire for greater gain is still clinging behind their surrender, and as such the surrender cannot be complete.

Know you all that if I am the Highest of the High, my role demands that I strip you of all your possessions and wants, consume all your desires and make you desireless rather than satisfy your desires. Sadhus, saints, yogis and walis can give you what you want; but I take away your wants and free you from attachments and liberate you from bondage of ignorance. I am the One to take, not the One to give, what you want or as you want.

Mere intellectuals can never understand me through their intellect. If I am the Highest of the High, it becomes impossible for the intellect to gauge me nor is it possible for my ways to be fathomed by the limited human mind.

I am not to be attained by those who, loving me, stand reverentially by in rapt admiration. I am not for those who ridicule me and point at me with contempt. To have a crowd of tens of millions flocking around me is not what I am for. I am for the selected few, who scattered amongst the crowd, silently and unostentatiously surrender their all — body, mind and possessions — to me. I am still more for those who, after surrendering their all, never give another thought to their surrender. They are all mine who are prepared to renounce even the very thought of their renunciation and who, keeping constant vigil in the midst of intense activity, await their turn to lay down their lives for the cause of Truth at a glance or a sign from me. Those who have indomitable courage to face willingly and cheerfully the worst calamities, who have unshakable faith in me, eager to fulfil my slightest wish at the cost of their happiness and comfort, they indeed truly love me.

From my point of view, far more blessed is the atheist who confidently discharges his worldly responsibilities, accepting them as his honorable duty, than the man who presumes he is a devout believer in God, yet shirks the responsibilities appor-

tioned to him through Divine Law and runs after sadhus, saints and yogis, seeking relief from the suffering which ultimately would have pronounced his eternal Liberation.

To have one eye glued on the enchanting pleasures of the flesh and with the other expect to see a spark of Eternal Bliss is not only impossible but the height of hypocrisy.

I cannot expect you to understand all at once what I want you to know. It is for me to awaken you from time to time throughout the ages, sowing the seed in your limited minds, which must in due course and with proper heed and care on your part, germinate, flourish and bear the fruit of that True Knowledge which is inherently yours to gain.

If on the other hand, led by your ignorance, you persist in going your own way, none can stop you in your choice of progress; for that too is progress which, however slow and painful, eventually and after innumerable incarnations, is bound to make you realize that which I want you to know now. To save yourself from further entanglement in the maze of delusion and self-created suffering which owes its magnitude to the extent of your ignorance of the true Goal, awake now. Pay heed and strive for Freedom by experiencing ignorance in its true perspective. Be honest with yourself and God. One may fool the world and one's neighbours, but one can never escape from the knowledge of the Omniscient — such is the Divine Law.

I declare to all of you who approach me, and to those of you who desire to approach me, accepting me as the Highest of the High, that you must never come with the desire in your heart which craves for wealth and worldly gain, but only with the fervent longing to give your all — body, mind and possessions — with all their attachments. Seek me not in order to extricate you from your predicaments, but find me in order to surrender

yourself wholeheartedly to my Will. Cling to me not for worldly happiness and short-lived comforts. but adhere to me, through thick and thin, sacrificing your own happiness and comforts at my feet. Let my happiness be your cheer and my comforts your rest. Do not ask me to bless you with a good job, but desire to serve me more diligently and honestly without expectation of reward. Never beg of me to save your life or the lives of your dear ones, but beg of me to accept you and permit you to lay down your lives for me. Never expect me to cure you of your bodily afflictions but beseech me to cure you of your ignorance. Never stretch out your hands to receive anything from me, but hold them high in praise of me whom you have approached as the Highest of the High.

If I am the Highest of the High, nothing is then impossible to me; and though I do not perform miracles to satisfy individual needs — the satisfaction of which would result in entangling the individual more and more in the net of ephemeral existence — yet time and again at certain periods I manifest the Infinite Power in the form of miracles, but only for their spiritual upliftment and benefit of humanity and all creatures.

However, miraculous experiences have often been experienced by individuals who love me and have unswerving faith in me, and these have been attributed to my nazar or Grace on them. But I want all to know that it does not befit my lovers to attribute such individual miraculous experiences to my state of the Highest of the High. If I am the Highest of the High I am above these illusory plays of Maya in the course of the Divine Law. Therefore, whatever miraculous experiences are experienced by my lovers who recognise me as such, or by those who love me unknowingly through other channels, they are but the outcome of their own firm faith in me. Their unshakable faith often superseding the course of the play of Maya gives them those experiences which they call miracles. Such ex-

periences derived through firm faith eventually do good and do not entangle the individuals who experience them into further and greater bindings of illusion.

If I am the Highest of the High, then a wish of my Universal Will is sufficient to give, in an instant, God-realization to one and all, and thus free every creature in creation from the shackles of Ignorance. But blessed is Knowledge that is gained through the experience of ignorance, in accordance with the Divine Law. This Knowledge is made possible for you to attain in the midst of ignorance by the guidance of Perfect Masters, and in surrendering to the Highest of the High.

RECOMMENDED READING

GOD SPEAKS. The Theme of Creation and Its Purpose, by Meher Baba. Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, revised and enlarged edition, 1973.

DISCOURSES by Meher Baba, in three volumes, paperback. Sufism Reoriented, Inc., 1967, San Francisco, and frequently reprinted.

LISTEN, HUMANITY by Meher Baba, narrated and edited by D.E. Stevens, Dodd, Mead and Co., New York, 1957. Reprinted.

Part I is Don Stevens' account of a gathering of Meher Baba's followers in India in November 1955.

In Part II are discourses on life and the spiritual path. There is also an autobiographical note by Meher Baba.

THE EVERYTHING AND THE NOTHING, additional discourses by Meher Baba, Meher House Publications, Beacon Hill, Australia, 1963, and frequently reprinted.

THE WAYFARERS by William Donkin, Meher Publications, India, 1948, republished 1969. An account of Meher Baba's work with the 'masts' or God-intoxicated.

STAY WITH GOD. A Statement in Illusion on Reality, by Francis Brabazon. Garuda Books, Queensland, Australia, 1959. Of this poetic work Meher Baba said, 'it contains food for the brain and a feast for the heart.' Reprinted.

- MUCH SILENCE** by Tom and Dorothy Hopkinson. Victor Gollancz, London, 1974. Revised and reprinted 1981 and 1982. A very sensitively written biography of Meher Baba.
- TALES FROM THE NEW LIFE WITH MEHER BABA.** Narrated by Eruch, Mehera, Mani and Meheru. The Beguine Library, California, U.S.A., 1976.
- THE SILENT WORD.** Being Some Chapters of the Life and Time of Meher Baba, by Francis Brabazon. Meher Baba Foundation, Sydney, Australia, 1978.
- GLIMPSES OF THE GOD-MAN, MEHER BABA (Vol. 1)** by Bal Natu, Sufism, Reoriented Inc., U.S.A. 1977.
- GLIMPSES OF THE GOD-MAN, MEHER BABA (Vol. II)** by Bal Natu, Meher House Publications (Bombay) India, 1979.
- RAMJOO'S DIARIES 1922 - 1929** by Ramjoo Abdulla, Sufism Reoriented Inc., U.S.A. 1979. A source book giving invaluable insight into Meher Baba's early years.
- THE DANCE OF LOVE** by Margaret Craske, Sheriar Press Inc., U.S.A., 1980. A world-renowned ballet teacher recounts anecdotes of her years with Meher Baba.
- LETTERS FROM THE MANDALI OF AVATAR MEHER BABA.** Compiled by Jim Mistry, Meher House Publications (Bombay) India, 1981. An outstanding range of letters on practical spirituality, mostly from Eruch Jessawala and Mani Irani.
- LOVE ALONE PREVAILS** by Kitty L. Davy, Sheriar Press Inc., U.S.A., 1982. A remarkable personal account of life with Meher Baba by a remarkable disciple.
- THE NOTHING AND THE EVERYTHING** by Bhau Kalchuri, Manifestation Inc., North Myrtle Beach, U.S.A., 1981. The author states that this book is based on ten per cent of the Book that Meher Baba wrote in the 1920s.

CENTRES FOR INFORMATION & BOOKS

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